



Kushneel Prakash | Thursday, 4th December 2025



Today!

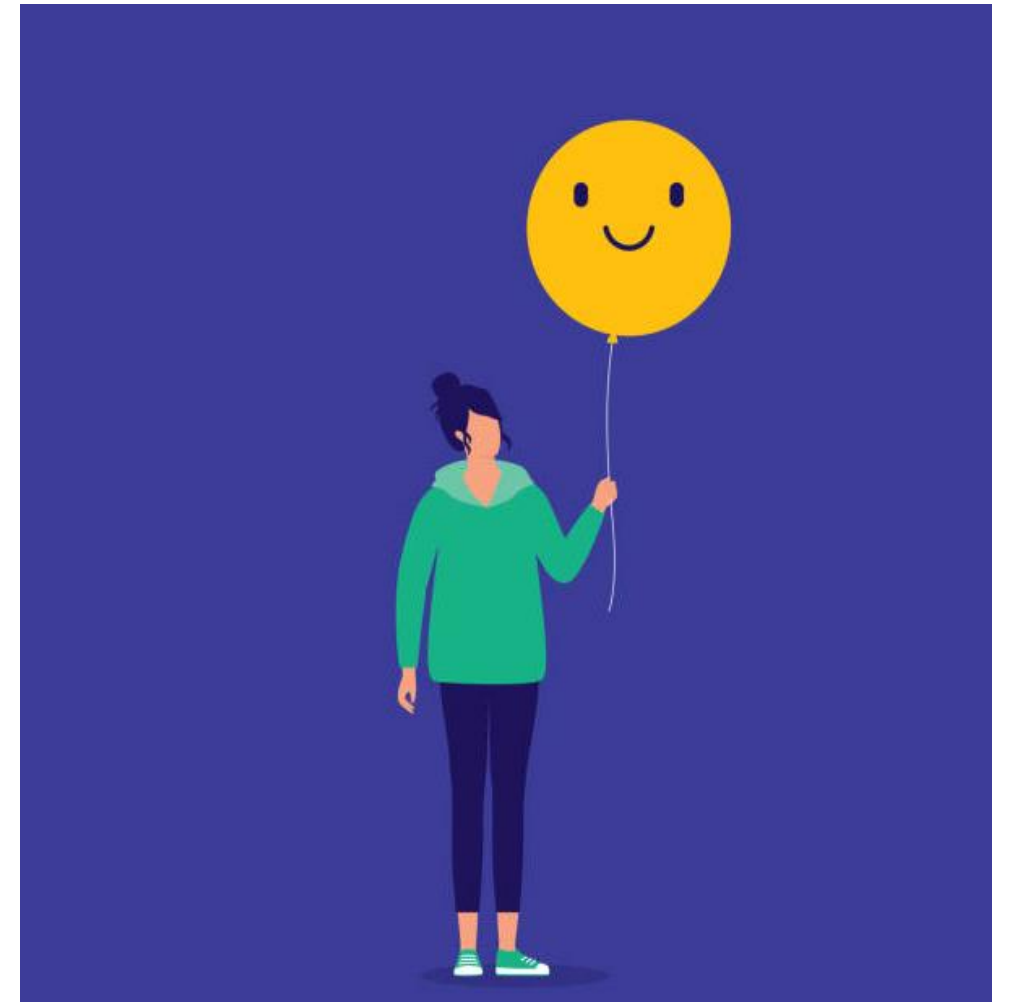
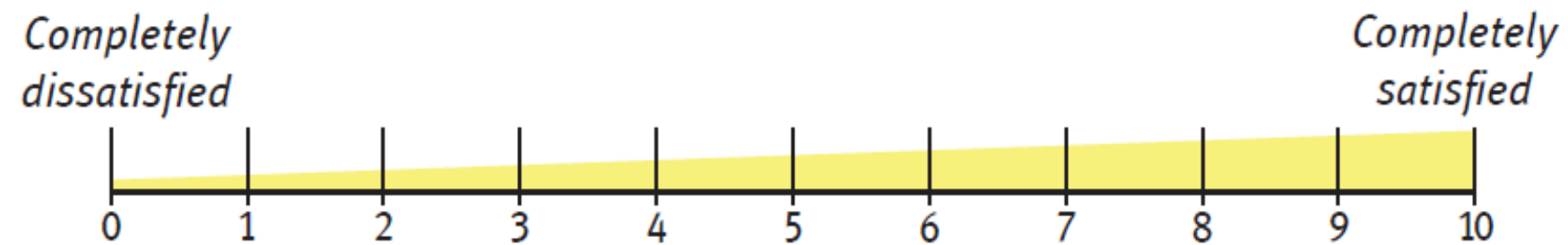
- Focus on Fiji.
- Why do we care about wellbeing?
- How can we measure wellbeing?
- Policy implications.

Why do we care about wellbeing and its data?

- Shows what truly improves people's lives
- Helps governments make better decisions
- Make invisible issues visible
- Ensure resources go where they matter most
- Builds accountability
- Supports a country's unique way of development

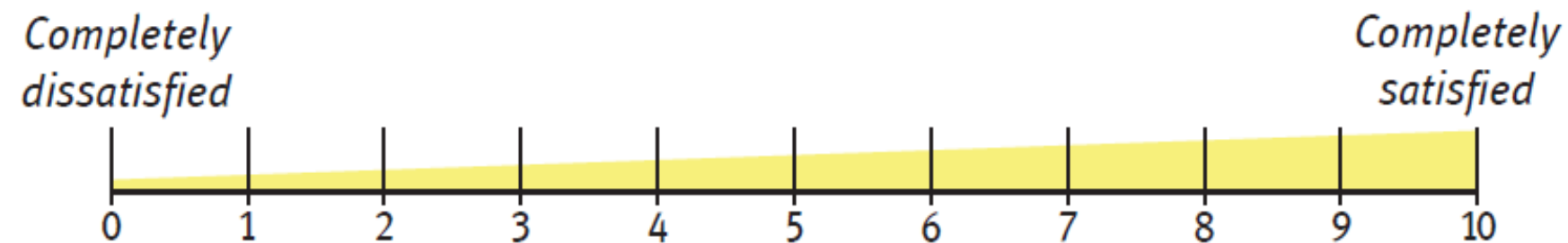
How do we measure life satisfaction?

- “All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life?”

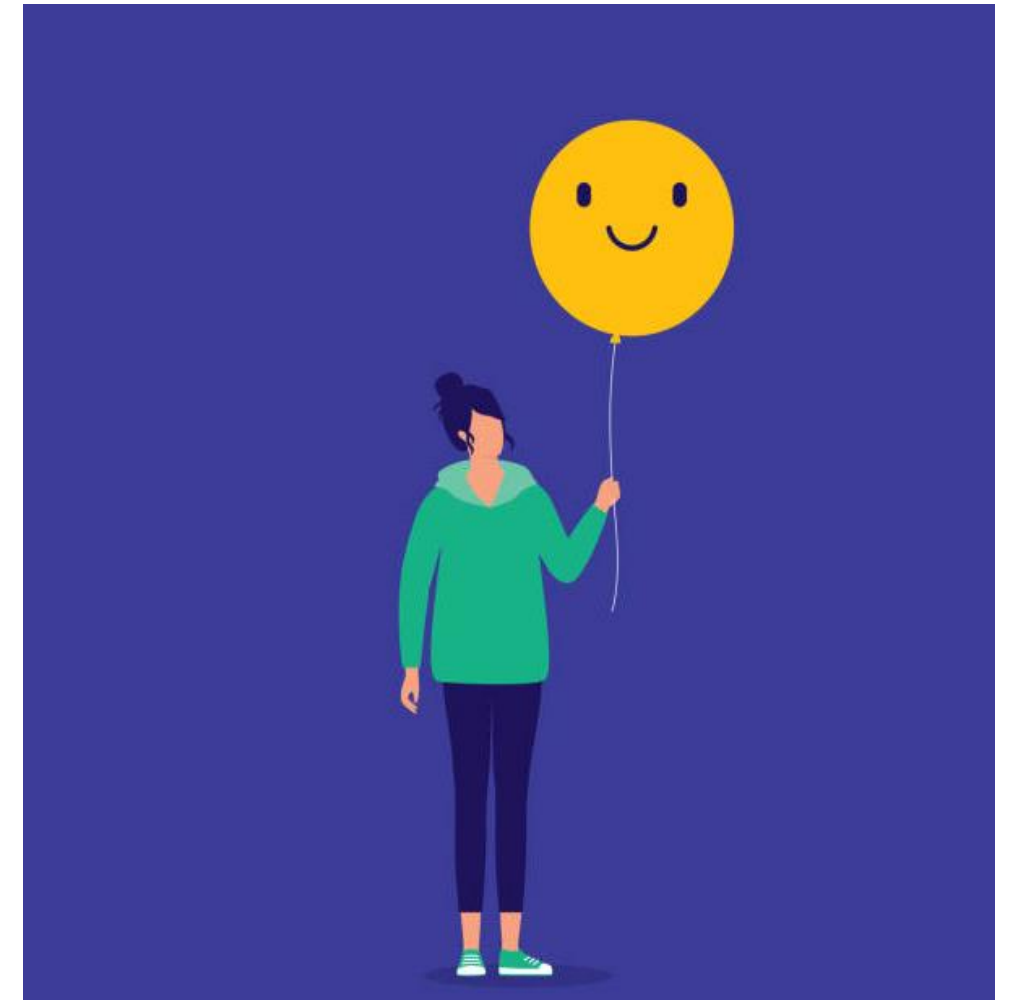


How do we measure life satisfaction?

- “All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life?”



- Widely used standard measure in national surveys.
 - Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey); The British Household Panel Survey, the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions; German Socioeconomic Panel, Gallup World Poll.



What are Australia and New Zealand doing in this space?

- New Zealand government is leading the way.
 - Wellbeing Budget since 2019.
 - Has “Living Standards Framework”.
 - Takes into account current wellbeing (income, housing, security, education, health, etc.) and future wellbeing (land use, skills and knowledge, health, nature and social environment).

What are Australia and New Zealand doing in this space?

- The Australian government has also launched its national wellbeing framework in 2023.
 - “Measuring What Matters” statement with life satisfaction at its core.



Wellbeing data in the Pacific

- **UNICEF** – Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys programme (**MICS**).
 - Since 1990s ~ 124 countries ~ 421 surveys.
 - Representative household survey based on country census data.
 - Strong emphasis on outcomes for children and women.
 - Major data source for more than 30 SDGs indicators.
 - Age coverage: 0-49 years.



Wellbeing data in the Pacific

- **Includes questions to measure life evaluations:**
 - Now, look at this ladder with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. Suppose we say that the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder do you feel you stand at this time?

Wellbeing data in the Pacific

- Already available completed surveys for some Pacific island countries:
 - Kiribati (2018/2019)
 - Tonga (2019)
 - Samoa (2019/2020)
 - Tuvalu (2019/2020)
 - Fiji (2021)



A snapshot of life evaluation in the Pacific!

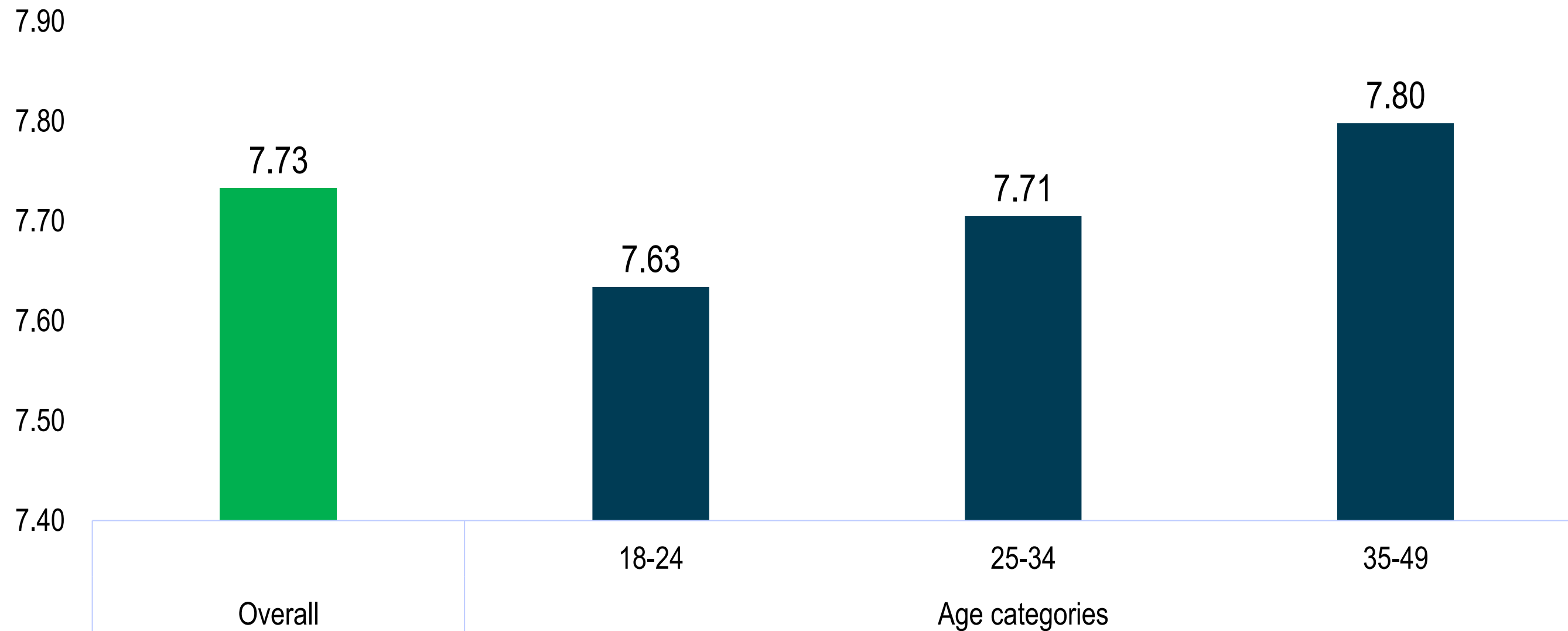




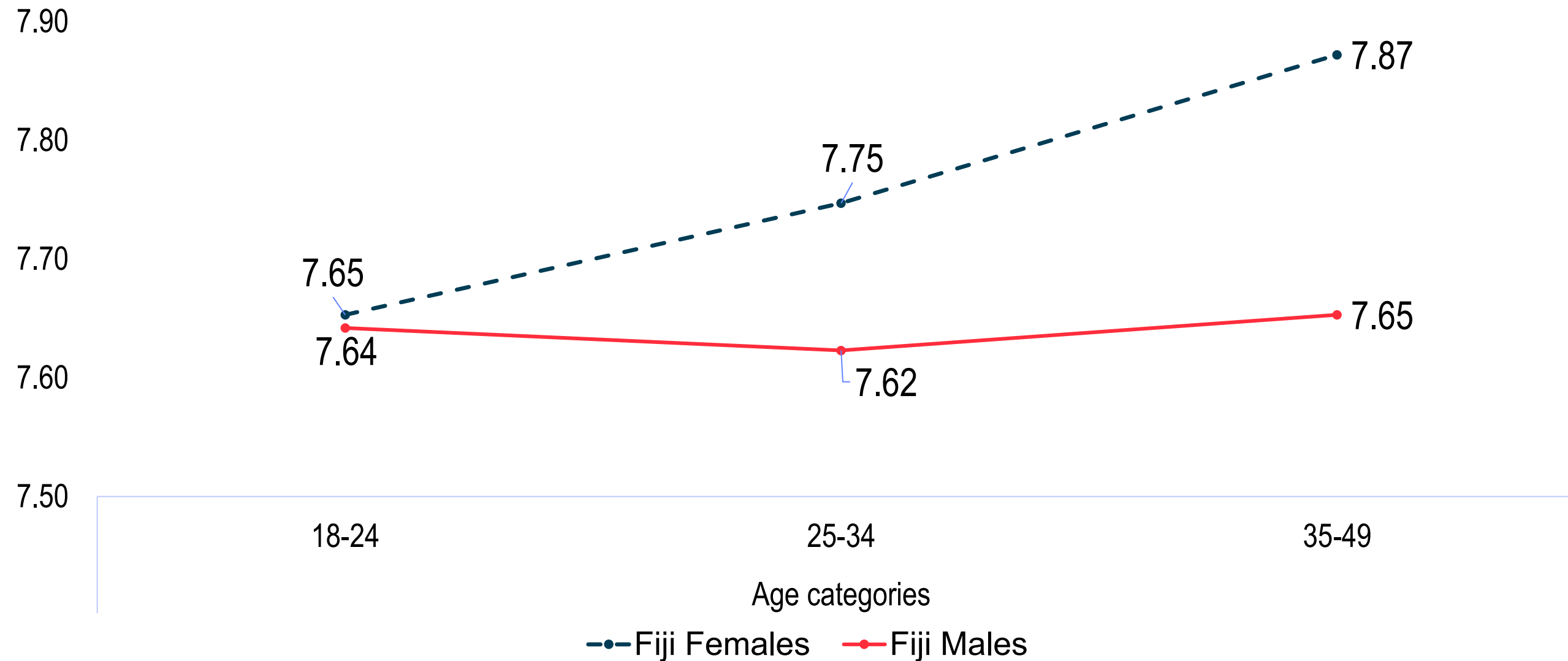
Life satisfaction in Fiji

- 2021 - **first** ever household survey for Fiji.
- Representative sample – 2017 Country Census of Population and Housing sampling frame.
- Sample composition: Age 15-49
- Households ~ 5,467
 - Women [18-49] – 4,561
 - Men [18-49] – 2,269
- Data collected by: Fiji Bureau of Statistics.

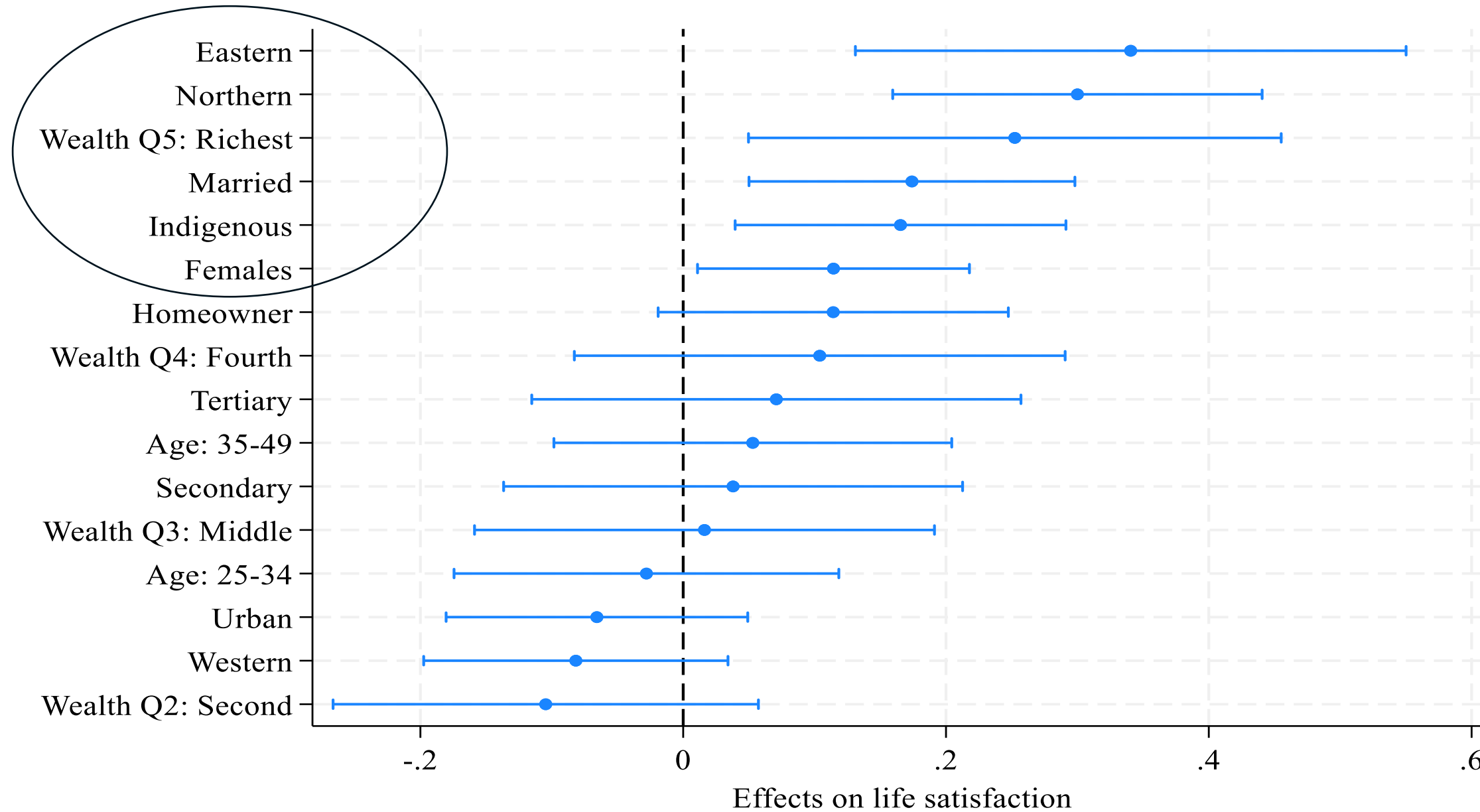
Life satisfaction in Fiji



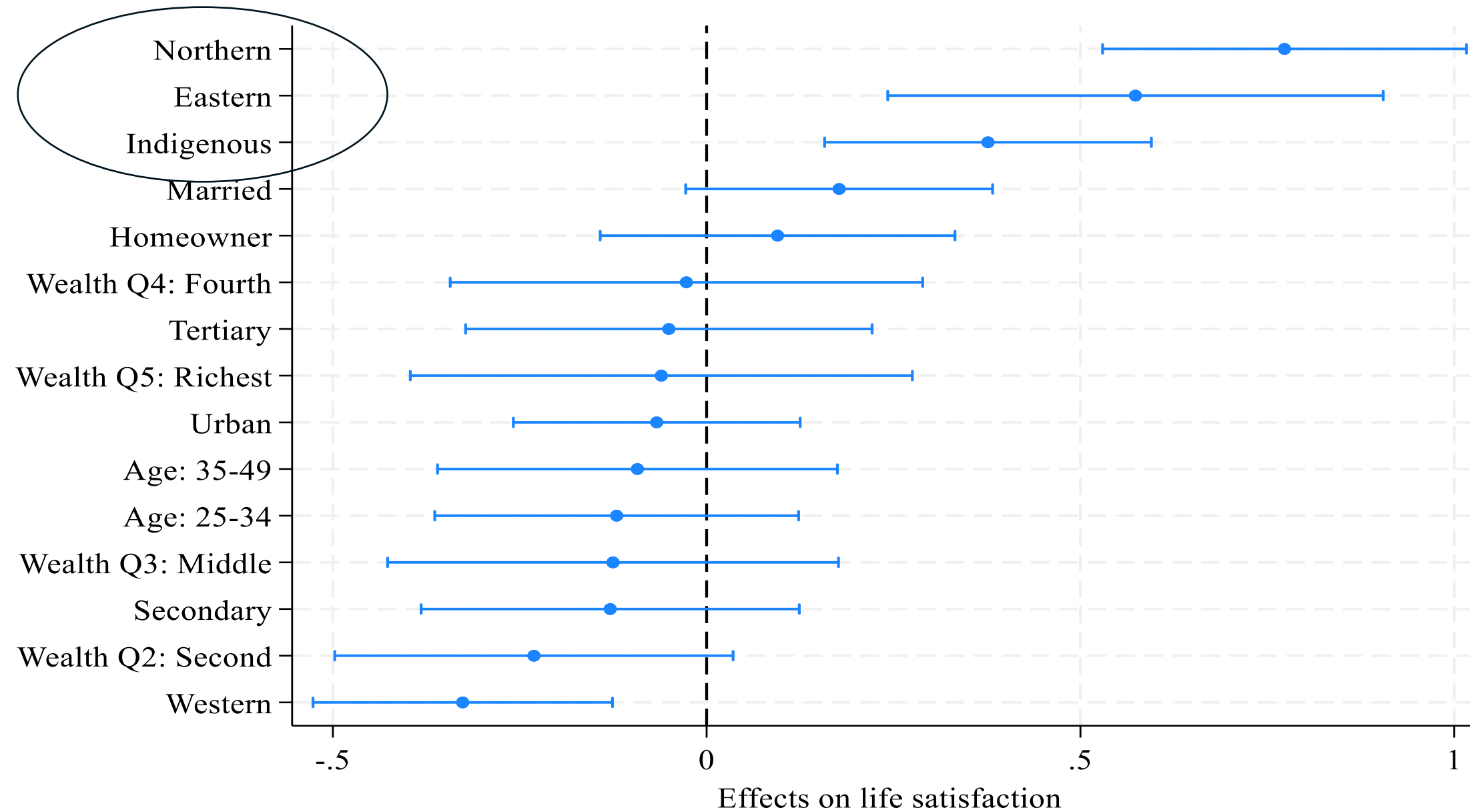
Life satisfaction in Fiji, by gender



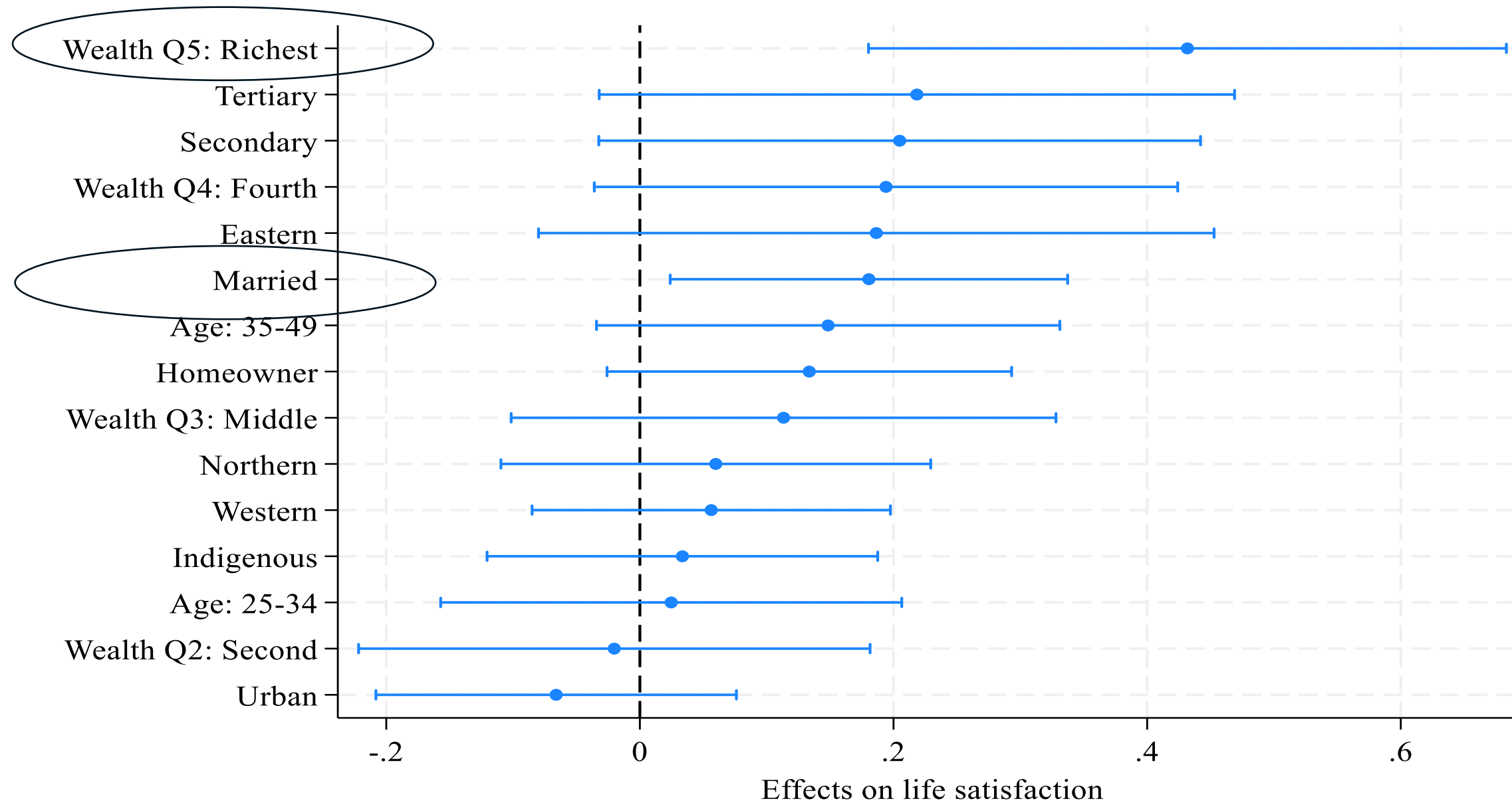
Life satisfaction in Fiji, determinants



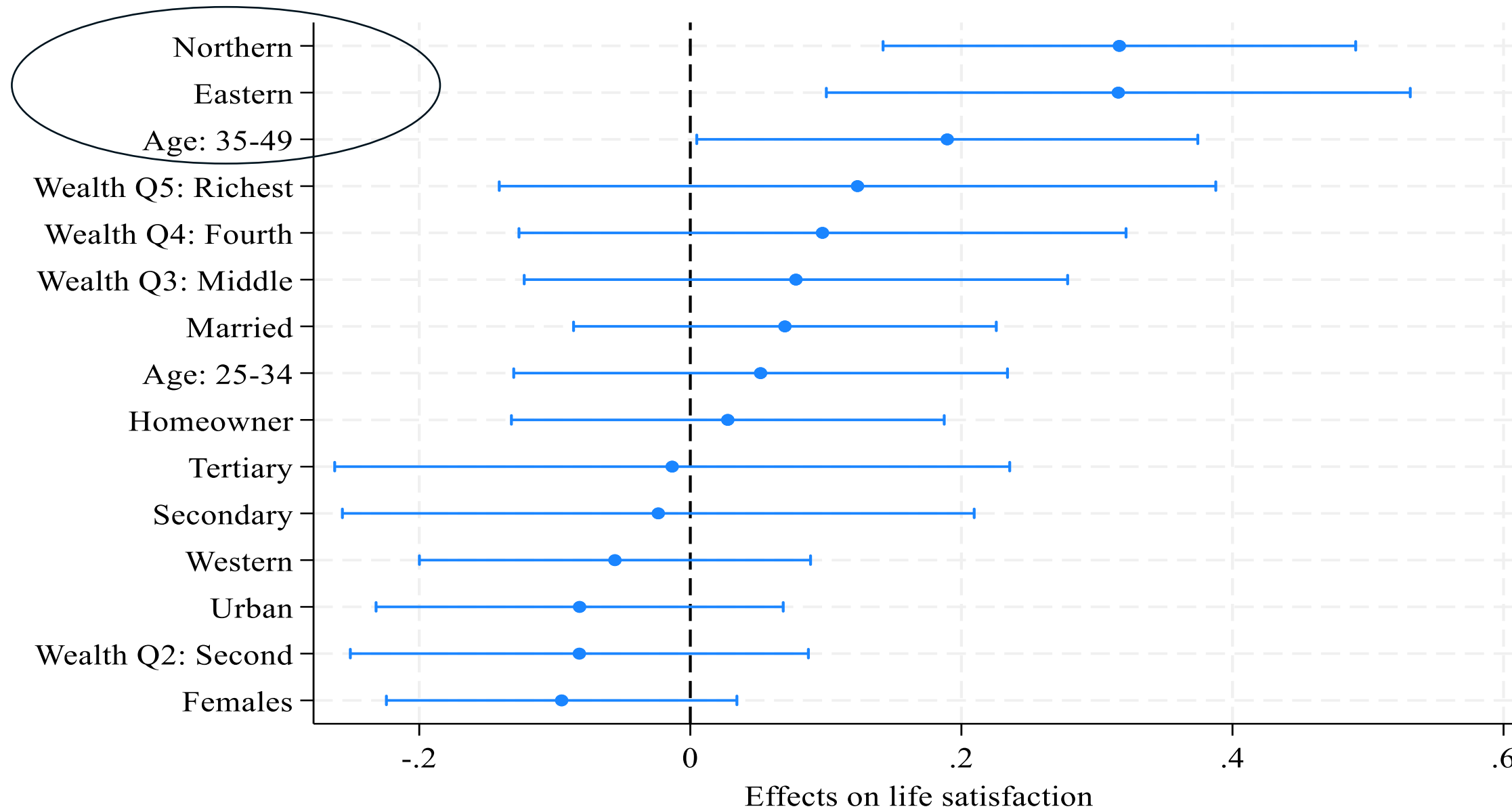
Life satisfaction in Fiji, sub-groups (Men)



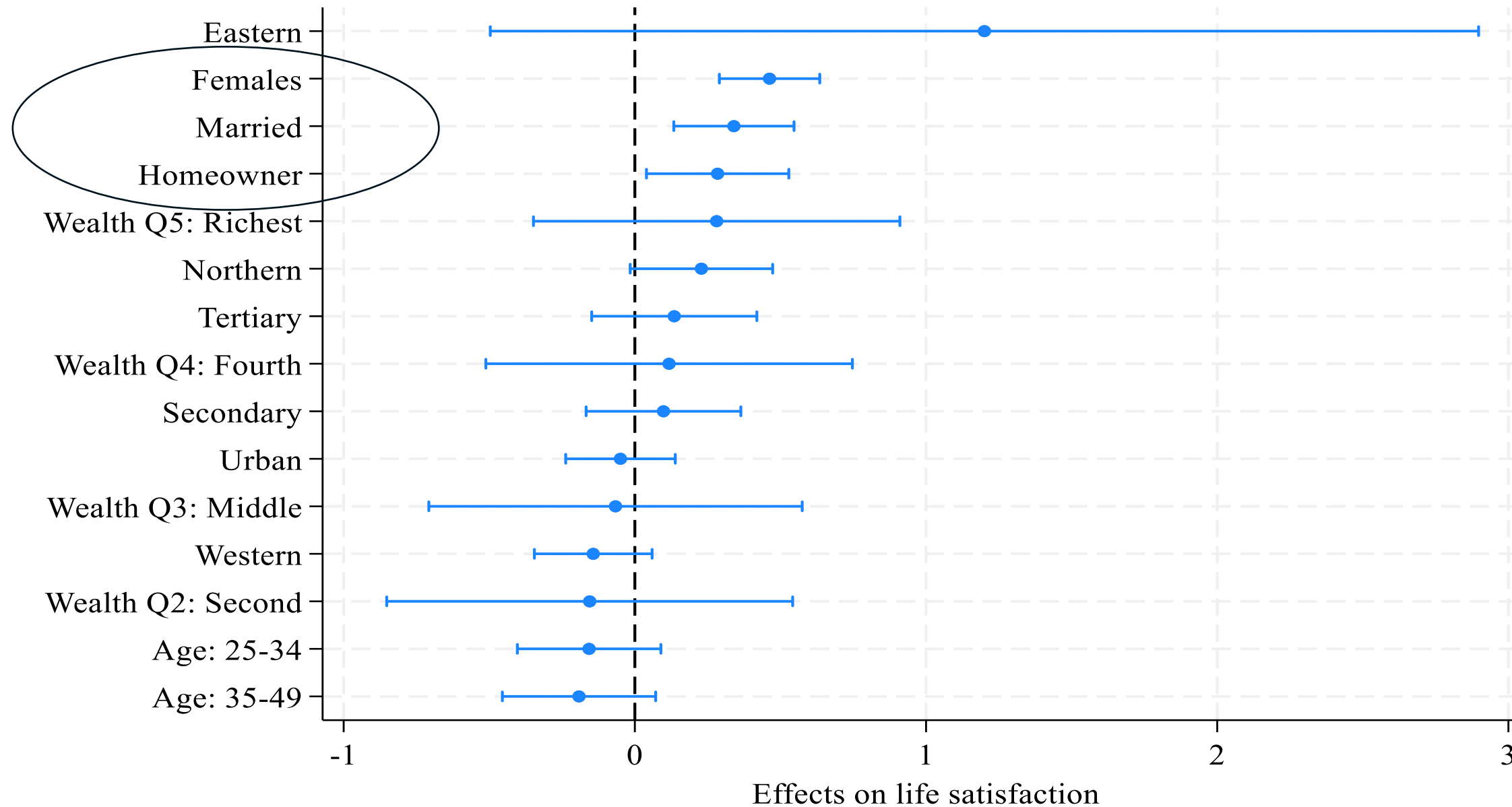
Life satisfaction in Fiji, sub-groups (Women)



Life satisfaction in Fiji, sub-groups (Indigenous)



Life satisfaction in Fiji, sub-groups (non-Indigenous)



How does the Fiji government view this?

From the National Development Plan 2025-2029 and Vision 2050:

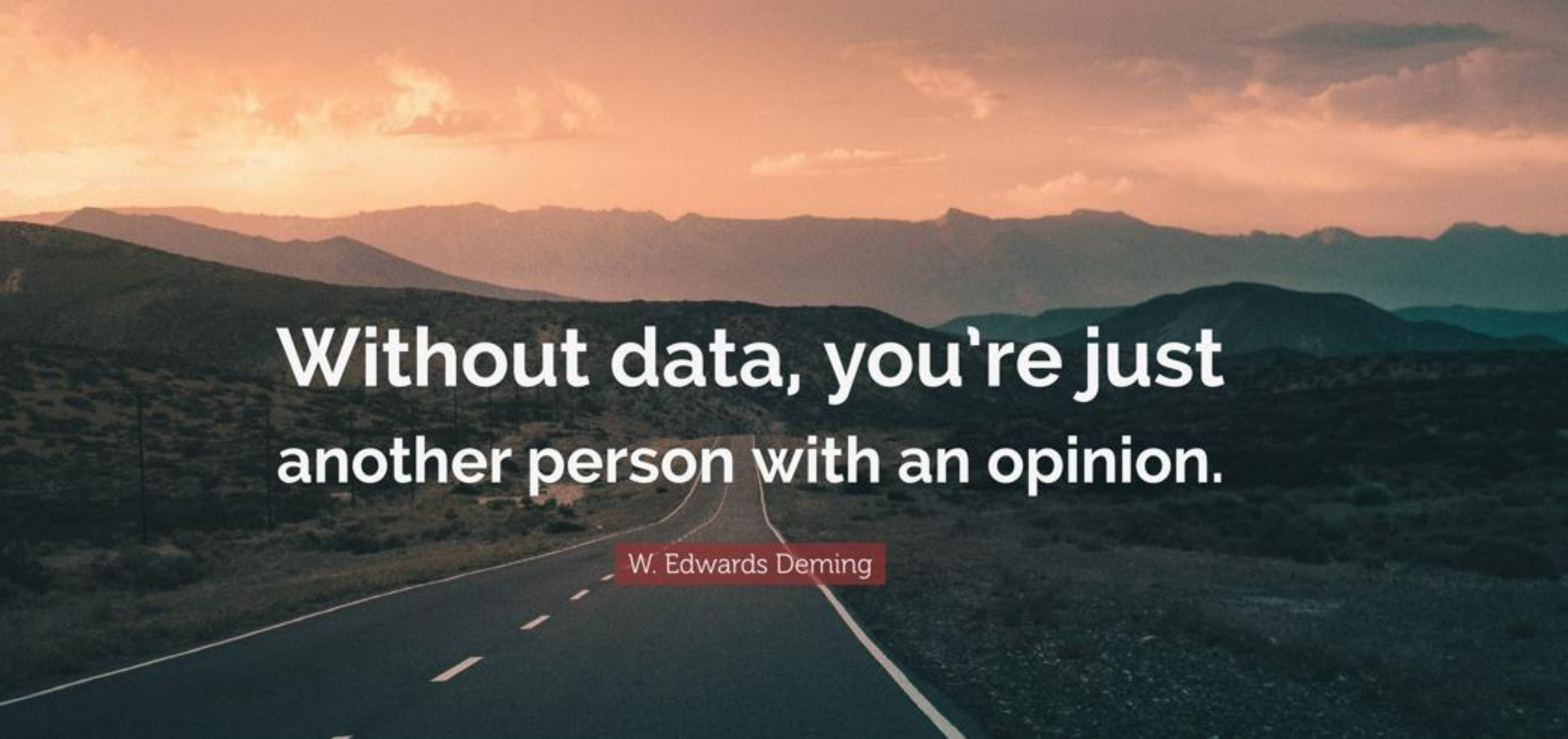
Those elected must place the continued progress of the nation and the wellbeing of the people as the priority.

Why should wellbeing in Fiji matter to its regional neighbours?

- Regional stability – Fiji is a hub
- Benefits regional labour mobility
- Climate resilience is ultimately about people
- Support regional cooperation (“Fiji-Australia Vuvale Partnership”)
- Help shape better regional policy

How can we build our knowledge base for data-driven policy?

- Need for purposeful collection of **longitudinal** data on aspects of what matters for wellbeing in Fiji (and the Pacific) to help analyse and evaluate policy and shocks.



**Without data, you're just
another person with an opinion.**

W. Edwards Deming